

Message Text

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64

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-25 NEA-10 IO-14 ACDA-19 AGR-20

INT-08 NIC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 TRSE-00 XMB-07

OPIC-12 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 SCEM-02 SCI-06

DRC-01 /264 W

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R 051130Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4917

INRO RUESAB/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 138

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION TWO OF TWO GABORONE 1755

6. REVIEW OF STATISTICS UNDERSCORES MAGNITUDE OF PROBLEM. BOTSWANA CURRENTLY RECEIVES ABOUT HALF TOTAL PETROL NEEDS FROM RSA AND HALF FROM MOZAMBIQUE VIA RHODESIA TO FRANCISTOWN. SLIGHTLY MORE THAN HALF TOTAL REQUIREMENT DIESEL FUEL COMES FROM MOZAMBIQUE IN VIEW GREATER NEED AT MINING CENTERS IN NORTH. BOTSWANA'S TOTAL ANNUAL REQUIREMENTS PROVISIONALLY ESTIMATED AT 120 MILLION LITERS FOR DIESEL, 50 MILLION FOR GASOLINE AND THREE MILLION FOR LUBRICANTS. DEMAND HIGHLY INELASTIC SINCE VAST MAJORITY ENERGY CONSUMED BY MINING OPERATIONS, BOTSWANA MEAT COMMISSION, FUEL-BURNING THERMO-ELECTRIC PLANTS AND RURAL BOREHOLES AND GENERATOR PORER PLANTS, SEVENTY PERCENT REDUCTION COULD THEREFORE HIT BOTSWANA RELATIVELY HARDER THAN RSA SINCE FAR LESS FUEL CONSUMED FOR NON-ESSENTIAL PURPOSES.

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AS INDICATION CONSUMPTION BY FEW MAJOR INDUSTRIES, SELEBI-

PIKWE COOPER SMELTER PRESENTLY CONSUMES 30,000 GALLONS
DIESEL FUEL PER DAY WHILE DIAMOND MINE AT IRAPA TAKES 660,000
LITERS PER MONTH.

7. CONCLUSION: IF EFFECTIVE EMBARGO ESTABLISHED SITUATION WOULD
BE CRITICAL. WITH BOTSWANA HEAVILY DEPENDENT IMPORTATION FROM
SOUTH AFRICA OF BULK BASIC FOODSTUFFS AND OTHER ESSENTIAL
MATERIALS, SERIOUS ECONOMIC SLUMP AND REDUCED AGRICULTURAL
PRODUCTION IN RSA AS CONSEQUENCE CRITICAL OIL SHORTAGE WOULD
RESULT IN SERIOUS BLOW TO OVERALL BOTSWANA ECONOMY AND
SPECIFICALLY TO VITAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY. IMPORTANT
BOTSWANA MEAT AND ORE EXPORTS DEPENDENT SUFFICIENT FUEL
IN SA BUNKERING FACILITIES. ALTHOUGH PROSPECT OF
IMPORTATION FROM NORTH EXISTS, A GOOD DEAL OF TIME WILL
OBVIOUSLY BE REQUIRED TO WORK OUT ARRANGEMENTS. AS ONE
CONSEQUENCE, ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF BOTZAM ROAD IS
SUDDENLY LOOMING LARGE. ONE GOB OFFICIAL COMMENTED THAT
CURRENT CRISIS PROBABLY REPRESENTS MILESTONE IN BOTSWANA'S
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN SENSE THAT IT WILL HENCEFORTH
INCREASINGLY ORIENT ITS ECONOMY TOWARD NORTH. ONE THING
IS CLEAR: THERE WAS AN ELEMENT OF PRESCIENCE IN BOTSWANA'S
BREAKING OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. WHILE THIS
ACTION WAS TAKEN LATE AND WITH SINCERE REGRET IT HAS ENABLED
BOTSWANA TO HAVE ITS VOICE HEARD IN AFRICAN AND OTHER CIRCLES
WITH AN ELEMENT OF SYMPATHY AND CONCERN. WHETHER THIS
WILL RESULT IN TANGIBLE AND NEAR TERM BENEFIT IN THE PRESENT
SITUATION REMAINS OF COURSE TO BE SEEN. PRESIDENT HAS ASKED
THAT WE CONTINUALLY BE APPRISED OF SITUATION AS IT UNFOLDS.
NELSON

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